

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - FEBRUARY 19, 2007

RECOGNITION OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES IN CITY PUBLICATIONS

Recommendation

Councillor Tony Carella recommends:

- 1) That (as defined below) all major printed materials published by the City of Vaughan (or by private individuals or corporations as part of a cooperative arrangement to which the City contributes identifiable resources) recognize, in an appropriate fashion, members of Council; and
- 2) That if a publication relates to matters within the purview of a committee or task force duly appointed by Council, that such publication recognize the contribution of the committee or task force to that effort.

Economic Impact

Nil

Purpose

To ensure

- (1) that citizens of Vaughan can identify the members of Council (by face, name, and office), and
- (2) that the voluntary service of citizens on any committee or task force duly appointed by Council receive appropriate recognition.

Background - Analysis and Options

Recognition of Members of Council:

It is a truth universally acknowledged that every citizen, at some time or another, makes a specific demand for service from some level of government, whether local, regional, provincial, or federal. Indeed, dealing with service demands is one of the primary functions of any government. To that end, substantial resources are devoted to ensuring timely responses to service demands from residents, businesses, local institutions, etc. *Access Vaughan* is the latest attempt by this municipality to deal with this phenomenon, and an immensely successful one, it would appear, from the 700 to 850 calls received on a daily basis by its "citizen service representatives".

Nevertheless, even the success of *Access Vaughan* has not obviated what is by tradition one of the most important functions of elected officials--to be the means by which citizens are satisfied that their government is responsive to their service needs and demands. Such an arrangement goes to the very heart of representative democracy. Hence, the frequent refrain so well known to every councillor, MPP, and MP: "What do we pay you for, if you can't help me?"

To facilitate this very basic function of elected officials, it is imperative that citizens are able to *identify* their elected representatives. Otherwise, how can they assign responsibility for any failure to receive a service they are in search of? Hence, the City's website devotes considerable space to providing information about members of Council--their photographs, personal background, past community involvements, and contact information. For this same reason photographs of all members of Council are displayed in the lobby of City Hall, so that citizens will, quite literally, "know them when they see them".

The intent of this recommendation is that important opportunities to ensure that citizens know who are their elected representatives not be missed. These opportunities are to be found in major printed materials published by the City, either on an annual or occasional basis.

Recognition of Committees:

By provincial statute and/or Council resolution, committees (including task forces) of individuals serve in a number of capacities (Heritage Vaughan, Greening Vaughan, etc.) relating to municipal mandates. Where such service is not entirely voluntary, compensation is token at best. In those instances where the work of a committee of volunteers may in any reasonably identifiable way lead to the publication of major printed material as defined below, such publication shall acknowledge the contribution of the members of the committee by the inclusion of a group photograph of the committee, along with appropriate captioned information.

Definitions:

For purposes of this recommendation, the following definitions shall apply:

“major printed materials” shall mean annual or occasional items prepared by City staff or with the use of identifiable municipal resources (i.e., informational, human, financial, etc.), such items being of a size or extent that can---without adding more than marginally to the final cost of the item---accommodate either a group photograph of Council, or a set of individual photos of all members of Council, along with identifying captions. Major printed materials shall not include pamphlets, flyers, or inserts of a limited size (e.g., an enclosure with property tax bills, explaining revenue sources and expenditure categories), which cannot accommodate such group or individual photos without adding more than marginally to the cost of the printed item.

“published” shall mean distributed by Canada Post or other bulk distributor to residents and/or businesses within the City of Vaughan or by hand to an identifiable subsection thereof (e.g., a prospectus furnished to the principals of individual businesses that may wish to relocate to Vaughan, and seek information in that regard)

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

Conclusion

This recommendation will facilitate the ability of citizens to identify their elected representatives, should they require their assistance in respect of the delivery of any municipal service; and further, it will ensure recognition of the volunteer services of Council-appointed committees.

Attachments

None

Report prepared by:

Councillor Tony Carella

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Tony Carella